28. A method according to claim 27, wherein the thermoplastic workpieces are textiles.

29. A method according to claim 9, wherein the workpieces are thermoplastic films.

REMARKS

Claims 7-11, 13-17 and 20-21 have been amended to remove multiple dependencies. New dependent claims 22-29 have been added. Claims 1-29 are in the case.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current preliminary amendment. The attachment is captioned "Version With Markings To Show Changes Made."

Respectfully submitted,

Martin Novack
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 25,164

Fairfield, Connecticut
Tel. (203) 255-4373
Fax. (203) 255-4259
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(V-80)

VERSION WITH MARKING TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims have been amended as follows:

7 (amended). A method according to claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the radiation absorbing material is exposed to radiation prior to positioning the workpieces together.

8 (amended). A method according to claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the radiation absorbing material is exposed to radiation through one of the workpieces.

9 (amended). A method according to claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the workpieces are made of plastics.

10 (amended). A method according to claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the radiation absorbing material is a radiation absorbing dye.

11 (amended). A method according to claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the lower limit of the absorption band is above 700nm.

13 (amended). A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1~~

~~to 11~~, wherein the absorption band defines the range 820-860nm.

14 (amended). A method according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1 to 11~~, wherein the absorption band lies in the infrared range.

15 (amended). A method according to claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the absorption band does not include the range 400-700nm.

16 (amended). A method according to claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the radiation is in the infrared range.

17 (amended). A method according to claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the wavelength of the incident radiation lies in the range 700-2500nm.

20 (amended). A method according to claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the radiation is a laser beam.

21 (amended). A pair of workpieces which have been welded by a method according to claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~.

The following new claims have been added:

22. A method according to claim 1, wherein the workpieces comprise fabrics.

23. A method according to claim 22, wherein the fabrics are nylon-based fabrics.

24. A method according to claim 22, wherein the fabrics are polyurethane coated.

25. A method according to claim 22, wherein the fabrics comprise polyamide/polytetrafluoroethylene laminated fabrics.

26. A method according to claim 1, wherein the workpieces comprise thin films such as polyester or PEEK.

27. A method according to claim 9, wherein the workpieces are made of thermoplastic.

28. A method according to claim 27, wherein the thermoplastic workpieces are textiles.

29. A method according to claim 9, wherein the workpieces are thermoplastic films.